

## **News from Ed Markey**

**United States Congress**

**Massachusetts Seventh District**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **MARKEY INTRODUCES BILL ON STOCKPILING OF POTASSIUM IODIDE TO PROTECT AGAINST RADIOACTIVE RELEASE**

**Bill requires the Nuclear Regulatory Commission to develop stockpiles  
and plan for distribution within six months**

**WASHINGTON, D.C. --**

Rep. Markey introduced a bill that would require the Nuclear Regulatory Commission to ensure that potassium iodide stockpiles are in place within 200 miles of every nuclear power plant in the United States. Potassium iodide has been proven to protect the thyroid gland from diseases caused by exposure to radioactive iodine released during a nuclear catastrophe. Children are most vulnerable to radiation-induced thyroid diseases because their thyroids are very active.

"Potassium iodide is to radiation exposure what Cipro is to Anthrax," Markey stated. "Since potassium iodide must be taken within a few hours of exposure to radioactive iodine to be effective, it needs to be easily obtained by the people who live close to a nuclear reactor."

The bill requires potassium iodide to be stockpiled in individual homes and at public facilities within 50 miles of a nuclear power plant. Potassium iodide should be stockpiled in individual homes and at public facilities such as schools and hospitals so that it is immediately available no matter what time of day or night the catastrophe occurs. Between 50 and 200 miles from the plant, community potassium iodide stockpiles should be available for evacuating populations and in case the weather carries the radioactive materials beyond 50 miles. Increased incidence of thyroid cancer has been documented in children who lived over 200 miles from the Chernobyl reactor that caught fire in 1985.

Despite the clear and compelling evidence that potassium iodide is a safe, effective, and inexpensive means of preventing radiation-induced thyroid diseases, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission and its staff have delayed the stockpiling and distribution of this substance for the last 22 years.

"There is no reason not to move forward with a concrete plan for stockpiling and distribution. Let's stop the bureaucratic foot-dragging and get the potassium iodide distributed to the communities that need it. In this new era of terrorism, in which the threat of an intentional release of radioactivity can no longer be ignored, we should waste no more time," said Rep. Markey.

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